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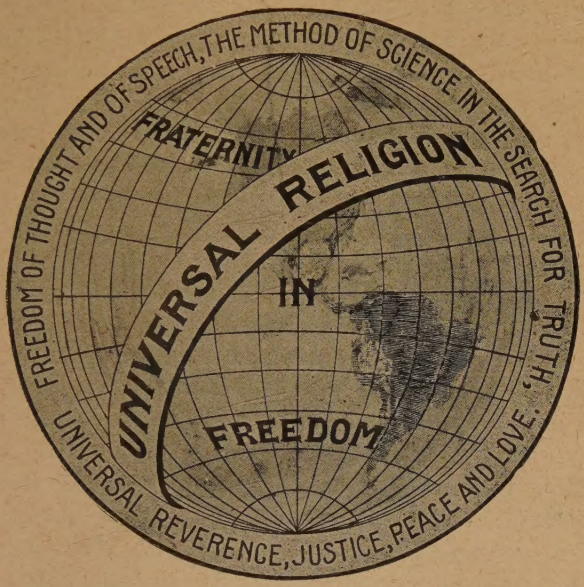
FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND OF SPEECH, THE METHOD OF SCIENCE IN THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH,
FRATERNITY
UNIVERSAL RELIGION
IN
FREEDOM
UNIVERSAL REVERENCE, JUSTICE, PEACE AND LOVE.

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This monthly is published from October to June in the interests of the new religious fellowship whose boundaries are as broad as humanity and whose principles are as universal as the universe.

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SOURCES OF CONSOLATION*

ALFRED W MARTIN.

The charge has been laid at the door of our movement that it has no gospel of comfort for the bereaved, no word of consolation and hope to offer the dying man as he pushes off his boat into the mists of the unseen; that "free, spiritual and universal religion may be good enough to live by but it is not a religion to die by," for any consolations that it may offer will be good for nothing because they do not really console.

Now before it can be settled whether or not a given consolation is good for anything we must ask, is it true, has it a basis in fact? Take, for instance, the Christian's consolation—belief in Jesus the Christ, the Saviour, who by his death paid what was required for the redemption of the race. Is this agenuine consolation with reality corresponding to it? The advanced scholarship of to day says No. The bottom question, therefore, about any source of consolation must be, is it true, is it grounded on reality? Whether or not it can PERMANENTLY console will depend on our answer to this question. No belief whatever can comfort us if we suspect it is false. Men and women there are who have tried the experiment of holding on to a once comforting belief after they have ceased to believe in it. But the experiment invariably ended in failure.

Truth is the fundamental requisite of the soul. The basis, then, on which we rest whatever consolation we have is the consciousness that what we believe is in entire harmony with all the known facts of the universe and that we stand ready at all time to expose our beliefs to the severest test which advancing science may demand. In other words, the consolation which, in free, spiritual and universal religion, takes precedence over all others is the spirit of truth, the passion to know things as they really are and to avoid being deceived, the disposition of mind that loves the truth, worships, seeks, follows it whithersoever it leads.

The author of the fourth gospel reports Jesus as saying that he will send the Comforter and that it will be the spirit of truth, adding that it will guide men into all truth,* thus indicating that all the truth has not yet been attained, that we must keep on the march, ever ready to readjust our religion to the discoveries of the spirit of truth.

*John, XIV., 14, 16.

*Part of a discourse delivered at Tacoma, Sunday, May 12th 1901.

The majority of the people do not share the opinion of Jesus. They say the very opposite, claiming that if a man wants comfort he must steer clear of inquiry, for the truth is often an uncomfortable thing, endangering what comfort one has. But Jesus maintains that nothing is so permanently comforting as the truth. A man gets peace of mind, and heart when he gets hold of a stable truth.

Again and again in the course of our lives are we beset by a consciousness of our ignorance, our doubt, our unfaithfulness to duty. At such times, to us, as to voyagers in a storm, the sky is black, the fierce winds howl, the stars have vanished. What, at such times, is our comfort? It is the knowledge that one thing is true. We have our compass, the spirit of truth, and it is our comforter.

Here then, beneath all other possible consolations, is the possession of the spirit of truth as the ultimate consolation. Whosoever takes the spirit of truth into his soul as a guide, ready and willing to follow whithersoever it may lead, has that on which all sources of comfort and consolation that are genuine and lasting depend. A Presbyterian minister once ventured the assertion that a preacher of Free Religion could not have much to say at a funeral. Well, perhaps not much, but what he would say would have the quality of sincerity, it would be the product of thought, not of tradition, it would be based on positive knowledge, not on dogma. Dogmatic assertion may satisfy those to whom the Presbyterian ministers, but those who have outgrown orthodoxy and come to a Free Church minister for a word of consolation and hope are people that need something else than dogmas.

'Tis easy enough to go to the house of mourning and dogmatize about the goodness of God and the virtue of having faith in Providence, to tell the mourners that "it is all for the best," that the calamity did not fall aimlessly, that a good intention underlies it, that some day God will disclose it and all will be well. But there are people who cannot be comforted in this way but who are helped only when taken by the hand, looked straight in the eye and frankly told in a simple, rational way of the mysteries of life and death. They are more consoled because more sincerely and honestly consoled, because the consolation offered has a solid substratum of verified truth rather than of dogma; the spirit of truth is the comforter.

Following then the guidance of the spirit of truth, what are some of the consolations strewn all along the way? Let me enumerate the more important ones.

1. Whatever may become of us when we die, we know that the universe is not the prey of circum-

stance and chance. We know that we are in the hands of the blessed powers, that there is "an Infinite and Eternal Energy whence all things proceed." This has been scientifically demonstrated. We human beings then are the product of this Power. It is our father and mother, and though we children are out on the great ocean of life, not knowing from what harbour we sailed nor to what port we shall put in, still there is One at the helm who does know; we realize that we are not lost and lone on a cheerless sea, and that into his keeping we can confidently entrust our future. As Clough has sweetly sung:

"It fortifies my soul to know
That howso'er I stray or range,
Whate'er I do, Thou dost not change.
I steadier step when I recall
That if I slip Thou dost not fall."

It is then an unspeakable comfort to know that we are in the hands, not of a Machine, not of an Organism, but of a power infinitely more than Person.

2. Of course there could be no consolation in the belief that an Infinite and Eternal Energy exists and that all things have proceeded from it. There is nothing to command our reverence or awe in Energy. Only when Energy appears as moral purpose, as will guided by truth to good ends, can it be to us divine and serve as a source of consolation.

If the belief in the existence of the Eternal Will is to furnish as full and rich and complete a consolation as possible then it is necessary to believe that this Will is good as well as omnipotent and all-wise. To be God He must have goodness. Does the spirit of truth guide us to this source of consolation? Can we add to our belief in Infinite Power, Eternal Goodness? I, for one, am of the opinion that we can. Suffice it now to say that the goodnes, we see in man warrants us in attributing goodness to the cause of man. Good men and women are revealers of a deeper goodness than their own, of the Infinite Goodness behind them. In the recognition of this fact lies the second of the consolations of a rational religion.

Friends can have no higher mission than to serve as revealers of the Divine and friendship cannot be said to fulfil for us the highest of which it is capable until we see the Infinite in our friends. If we looked at them in that light the world would not be so dark when they leave us because what they revealed and the office they fulfilled remain. The light of their countenance still shines down upon us, and for us to walk, work, grow in that holy light, to prove ourselves worthy of our friends, sanctifying daily life through the hallowing touch of an eternal friendship,—oh, who can estimate the value of a consolation like this?

3. And this leads to a third source

of comfort and consolation, namely, our idea of death. Death to us is not the dreadful thing which the old theology has painted it. The popular, orthodox religion teaches that death came into the world as the result of "original sin," that it is a sign of the "wrath of God," who was angered at Adam's offence. In this view of death there is nothing consoling. On the contrary, it is a most depressing notion and accounts for the blackness and gloom connected with death, the funeral pall, the black gowns and gloves and all the rest of the funeral paraphernalia. But death ought to be associated with all that is brightest and fairest, with the lilies of the valley, the fragrance of the spring, the dawn of summer mornings, the tints of the autumn woods, the beautiful whiteness of winter. Leave tradition, conventionality, dogma; follow the spirit of truth, the comforter, and he will guide you to the belief that death is not a curse but a blessing, not a symbol of God's wrath, but a natural, divinely ordained incident in the career of everything that lives, a vital process of prime importance, part of the wise, just and loving order of the universe.

4. And here we touch the SUPREME consolation, the eternal hope, the thought of immortality. Of course, we have not the least idea what any other existence than the present is like nor shall we have unless the claims of Spiritualism become some day universally verified. Science has supplied us with data to verify the doctrines of Deity and Duty, but she has not yet furnished materials with which to build up a demonstration of the doctrine of Destiny. This, however, I believe she will yet do. Meanwhile we have no knowledge of any other state. However firmly we may believe in our conscious survival after death, we cannot say we KNOW man is immortal. When aman says he KNOWS, the most he can honestly mean is that he feels a very strong assurance. Even Dante, who dared descend to the depths of Hell, who climbed the scarped cliffs of Purgatory and passed on to the highest Heaven, even he is extremely cautious about his language when describing the future state of the soul. To take Dr. Adler's illustration [and it is to him that I am indebted for this reference to Dante's thought] the poet does not say he met "the spirits of St. Thomas" as though he were speaking of a disembodied ghost, but "the life of St. Thomas." The LIFE is the word to use, for "there is a life underlying our life which is imperishable though we know not the whence or the how of its continuance." About the details of its continuance we need not trouble ourselves, nor entertain any prying curiosity. With Thomas Paine, the devout deist, we can say, "I trouble not myself about the MANNER of my future existence. I content myself with be-

lieving, even to positive conviction, that the power which gave me life can continue it in any form He pleases." And to this noble utterance we may add Emerson's grand thought that "whatever it be that the great Providence has in store for us it must be something large and generous and in the great style of His works." This, I take it, is the highest of consolations, because, if we can say that God is all-wise and good, then if we are logical we must also say that He will make the life of ALL his creatures a blessing. If not, it can only be because He cannot or because he will not, and in either case he would not be God, for goodness is an indispensable attribute of deity. If we believe that God is Love we are bound to believe that every soul will be saved, that is, educated through the infinite goodness of God, who if need be will track us for millions of years, until, by the discipline of suffering, we realize that the only true life is the eternal life, the life of obedience to all the laws of God.

SOMETIME.

BY MAY RILEY SMITH.

Sometime, when all life's lessons have been learned
And sun and stars for evermore have set,
The thing which our weak judgments here have spurned,
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,
Will flash before us out of life's dark night,
As stars shine most in deeper tints than blue;
And we shall see how all God's plans were right,
And how what seemed reproof was love most true.

And we shall see how, while we frown and sigh,
God's plans go on as best for you and me;
How, when we called, he heeded not our cry,
Because his wisdom to the end could see.
And e'en as prudent parents disallow
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,
So God perhaps, is keeping from us now
Life's sweetest things because it seemeth good.

And if, sometime, comingled with life's wine,
We find the wormwood and rebel and shrink,
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine
Pours out this portion for our lips to drink.
And if some friend we love is lying low,
Where human kisses cannot reach his face,
Oh, do not blame the loving father so,
But wear your sorrows with obedient grace!

And you will shortly know that lengthened breath
Is not the sweetest gift God sends his friends.
And that, sometimes, the sable pall of death
Conceals the fairest boon his love can send.
If we could put ajar the gates of life,
And stand within, and all God's workings see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
And for each mystery could find a key!

But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart!
God's plans, like lilies, pure and white unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the chalices of gold.
And if, through patient toil we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,
When we shall clearly know and understand,
I think that we will say, "God knew the best!"

UNITARIANISM.

Letter from Rev. George H. Greer.
(published by permission)

Dear Mr. Editor:

Your sermon, "Why Unitarianism fails to satisfy," with request for the favor of a review, has been carefully read and studied.

The tribute to Unitarianism is just and honorable. Your organization should have been treated with more charity than was manifest in the criticism of many of "the brethren." To state, from time to time, the grounds of your dissatisfaction with

Unitarianism is a duty that will remain. Your criticism of the Preamble and Constitution adopted at Saratoga in '94, is fair. If an organization desires its platform to be acceptable to all earnest seekers of truth and righteousness, then it must not present one which only some can accept. Theological statements must be excluded.

You state what seems the truth, when you say,—"The only just, generous, noble course, is to shun every name that can offend the conscience of any one, and adopt a name in harmony with universal ends." Many Unitarian ministers are in sympathy with your stand for perfect freedom in religion. Gannett and Crothers are not alone in their thought that Unitarianism is a movement toward ideal freedom. The child of God will not be satisfied with less. Those who have "all the freedom they want" have one ideal, you have another. In general it is not a question of ideals, but of present usefulness in the place where duty finds one. Environment is considered and so are social relations. Few feel like stepping out to do picket duty. It is lonesome. Fellowship and a tent, are more comfortable. Yet the advancing religious host must have its pickets. Heber Newton regards Unitarians as such. Such is the "Free Church of Tacoma," in its relation to Unitarianism.

I see no way for those who stand for "complete mental liberty," to deny that your position is the only consistent one, unless they assume, that a society cannot truly claim to be a religious organization, or church, without using the words God and Jesus, in its preamble or constitution.

It must be admitted that "Theism. and immortality, are questions still open." Belief in God, or love to God, that ought to be so stated, or defined, that skepticism would be ridiculous."

It is not, as yet, and so must be regarded as creedal;—excluding noble men, and women, from church fellowship. On page 77 of the pamphlet you express in clear, strong, logical form, many noble ideas. Specially pertinent is the sentence,—"Important as your or my private opinions may be, they are far less important than that spirit of tolerance and generous regard for others' rights which refuses to set up, or leave up, any fence that keeps apart, those who ought to be united."

In your "provisional substitute," I would prefer, in the Preamble, the word members, for constituent units. In the eleventh line, would leave out the words, "amount of;" and in article 1 would omit the word "National."

Your position is well summed up on pages 78-80. You have no controversy with Unitarians, but call attention to the inconsistency of

their stand for the name Unitarian, and its, or their limiting "creedlet," while claiming absolute, religious freedom.

Certainly every religious person must agree with you that, "better it is to be alone with our ideal, than in company with all the world and our ideal deserted, and dishonored."

The evolution of Unitarianism will ere long justify the trust and prayer of your peroration.

SECOND ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF THE SEATTLE SOCIETY FOR UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

The second annual festival of the Seattle Society for Universal Religion was held May 5th, at Elk's Hall. The attendance was unusually large and the occasion pronounced by all a complete success. Mr. John Arthur, vice-president of the society, called the assembly to order shortly after eight o'clock and the programme of music and speeches was so arranged as to allow an intermission of half an hour for social intercourse which was heartily enjoyed by all present. Vocal solos were rendered by Messrs. Salvini and Lufsky, a violin solo by Mr. Levy, two piano duetts by the Misses Beach and Barrager. Addresses were made by chairman John Arthur, Rabbi Theodore F. Joseph, Rev. Hedley A. Hall, Ph. D., Judge E. N. Parker, president of the Tacoma society, and Rev. Alfred W Martin. Following is a report of the addresses, excepting that of Dr. Hall, who has since returned to Chicago. The lay delegates from Tacoma were Mr. and Mrs. R. T. Reid, Mr. and Mrs. N. McAulay and Judge Parker.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS OF JOHN ARTHUR.

About two and one-half years ago I was asked by a distinguished professional gentleman in Tacoma to introduce Mr. Martin to my friends in Seattle and aid him in establishing here the course of lectures which eventually led to the organization of the "Seattle Society for Universal Religion." This gentleman assured me that Mr. Martin's discourses would appeal strongly to the most intellectual men in our community and that I need have no fear in commending him to my friends and neighbors. I need hardly tell you who have attended these discourses that that assurance has been amply justified. Mr. Martin's lectures, or sermons, have been free from the defects which had characterized free-thought discussions theretofore in Seattle. We had had various societies and lecturers whose abusive talks upon Christianity and general violence of tone had rendered them very unacceptable to thoughtful, calm-minded men. Nothing of this sort has ever appeared in any address delivered

by Mr. Martin: he is strikingly free from all bigotry, virulence and hostility to Christianity or any other religion and is a true exponent of genuine free-thought in its highest manifestations. I am sure that you will all agree with me that his discourses have warmed our hearts and broadened our minds. To them we can invite our orthodox friends without running any risk of having afterwards to apologize for what they hear; indeed, we can promise them intellectual feasts much richer than they are accustomed to. We all desire to keep up a movement so thoroughly respectable in character and so beneficial to ourselves.

I am glad to be able to announce to you that the trustees have insisted that Mr. Martin shall resume charge as the minister to this Society. We in Seattle know a good thing thing when we have it and we are sufficiently determined in character to hold on to it. Mr. Martin has spoiled us and in our spoiled condition we will have no one but him. He will resume the course on next Sunday evening and continue it thereafter. We should like to steal him away entirely from our Tacoma friends; but Judge Parker is over here to prevent anything like that. We shall, however, have the benefit of the Sunday evening meetings.

No matter how attractive and inspiring such a movement may be, it cannot be made a success without labor and money. The labor in building up this Society has been done in very large measure by Mr. Griffith Davies and Judge George. The funds of the Society are in the hands of the latter and I will now call upon him to report to you whether we are bankrupt or in a fair way to be saved.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER.

Mr. R. R. George, treasurer of the Society, in submitting his report said that the financial condition of the Society was most encouraging, for not only has the deficit carried over from 1899 been paid off, but after an expenditure since last October of $1025.13 (the chief items of which were the purchase of over two hundred extra chairs and one hundred and fifty hymnals) a balance of $30.62 remains in the treasury. To this, he said, must be added $164.70 representing subscriptions due but not yet collected, so that we shall close the present season free from debt and with a small balance to carry over into the next year. Mr. Martin's lectures given in January netted the Society $256.25, a sum more than sufficient to pay for the extra chairs and the hymn books. A summarized statement of the receipts and disbursements was read and elicited hearty applause.

ADDRESS OF RABBI T. F. JOSEPH

I am heartily glad to be present at this festal, sociable gathering. I am happy to hear that a Renaissance of free thought has been brought about in this section of the land through the means of your society and through your minister. I feel gratified that a beginning is being made in this city to bring together on a common platform men of different minds, different occupations, different denominations, but of common hopes and aspirations.

It is high time that the chief exponents of the church come together not for the purpose of proclaiming those dogmas and doctrines that divide class and class, creed and creed, religion and religion, but for the higher, holier purpose of giving expression to those unifying factors, ideas and ideals that bind the members of all religions into one loving band of brothers.

In this connection I am reminded of a little story that is told of Rubinstein who was invited to give a concert in the imperial palace at St. Petersburg. Arm-chairs to seat the audience were placed at discreet intervals, in order to look real select and fashionable. The eminent pianist refused to play unless the arm-chairs were removed and rows of seats substituted. Then, seated in close range of each other, the fire of sympathy took hold of that audience and never before had there been such outbursts of enthusiasm. That is just the object we are trying to accomplish. We are removing the arm-chairs upon which the haughty priest and congregant have been seated so long in a cold, distant attitude and are bringing in the rows of seats, in which men of all classes, callings and creeds can meet, extend the friendly hand and exchange a friendly word.

It may seem strange to some that on this occasion even a Jew or a Jewish rabbi is present. But I am here to night, not in spite of my being a Jew, or even though I am a Jew, but because I am a Jew. In fact I am more than a Jew, I am both a Jew and a universalist or if I may coin the expression, a Juniversalist. Because I am a Jew, because I am a descendant of that people, one of whose prophets has given utterance to that sublime, modern and permanent doctrine of universal religion, "My house shall become a house of prayer for all nations;" because I am a co-religionist of that inspired seer, from whose lips has dropped that thrilling thought, uttered centuries ago, but used only eight years ago as the motto of the World's Parliament of religions, "Have we not all one father, has not one God created us?" because of this, I feel myself thoroughly at home upon this broad, progressive platform. In this spirit of sympathy, I bring the greet-

ings of those jewish prophets and psalmists who have made the valleys of Samaria and the hills of Jerusalem resonant with their speech and song. I bring the greeting of my congregation Temple de Hirsch. I extend the hand of spiritual fellowship to Rev. Alfred W. Martin who will minister with and near you for the working out of those ethical and educational problems whose solution will hasten the realization of that golden dream, when men will meet together for united prayer and organized action; not as followers of Moses, Jesus or Mohammed, not of Brahma, Buddha or Confucius, not of Luther, Wesley or Calvin, not of Spencer, Comte or Ingersoll, but as liberal, cosmopolitan men, who feel themselves members of one family, children of one universal Father, worshipping him in that large hall of humanity so beautifully outlined by Tennyson, "A pagoda, neither temple, mosque nor church, but loftier, simpler, open-doored to every breath of heaven and truth and reason and love and justice and came and dwelt therein."

ADDRESS OF E. N. PARKER.

We come to you, this evening, as representatives of the First Free Church of Tacoma, with greetings of good cheer, and with the prayer that permanent success may attend your efforts in this our sister city.

Some years since, the people of liberal tendencies in Tacoma, were united under the name "Unitarian." Not all however were of Unitarian emanation. Some were Universalists, some Quakers, (of the liberal branch,) and not a few of various, liberal orthodox persuasions. It soon became evident that no creed could be formed sufficiently broad and comprehensive to embrace the views of the society. Not even the Unitarian declaration, which still clings to some extent to the authority of tradition, would suit the felt need for a free fellowship. We then assumed the present name and cast aside all adherence to traditional authority. This was done with naught but feelings of profound respect and esteem toward all religious beliefs and especially those with which many of us had theretofore been associated. Since then, the spirit of our society, while liberal and broad in the extreme, has fostered a spirit of conservativism quite at variance with the tendencies of most ultraliberal religious movements, a spirit which to my mind gives stability, such as unsparing radicalism is never attended with. Being Evolutionists we recognize that the crude beginnings of religious thought are as much a part of, and as necessary to, the consummation of the great

scheme of world-evolution as is the work of the most advanced modern ethical scholar,—if indeed there is to be any final consummation.

If I had any word of caution to give this new Society of Universal Religion, which is this evening celebrating its second annual festival, it would be: Take care how you regard those steps of religious thought on which you have arrived at your present stage of religious progress. While we would encourage freedom of thought, with an eye single to the attainment of truth whencesoever it comes, let us ever remember that it is the conservative spirit, which prevents a lapse into a confusion and disorder, fraught with greater errors, than even the crudest religious conceptions. It is the lack of appreciation of this great truth that has wrecked, dissipated and brought to an untimley end unnumbered movements, started with the best of intentions for the betterment of the race.

Mr. President in this spirit we join hands with you and this Society and wish for your permanent prosperity.

ADDRESS OF ALFRED W. MARTIN

The question was raised last Sunday evening whether or not sociability is an orthodox commodity for which this society has no use. I think we are demonstrating tonight that sociability is not exclusively orthodox but rather one of the universal permanent features characteristic of all organized religions. Just here let me pause to reciprocate the courteous and kindly sentiments expressed by Rabbi Joseph. May the fellowship formed between us (shaking hands with the rabbi) continue to gain in strength and depth and occasion for interchange of thought be frequent. I rejoice in the presence of our friend here tonight and I trust that in the course of the ensuing season we shall have an occasional pulpit-exchange and that the fellowship between his society and ours may be fostered and increased. It is assuredely a most excellent plan for us to hold annually such a festival as this for it gives us not only an opportunity for more social intercourse but also for a fresh realization of the essential dignity, beauty and worth of our cause. In all modesty and with entire truthfulness may we say that our movement represents the vanguard of the world's religious leadership. I am well aware of the fact that this claim is often made by Unitarians for their sect, but the claim cannot be substantiated while Unitarianism continues to keep a creedlet in its terms of fellowship. A little creed it is of only two articles,

yet big enough to shut us and others out, besides interfering with that absolute freedom of thought and of speech which is so essential to the growth of a vital religion. Until Unitarianism catches up to us we have an important mission to fulfil in holding aloft the ideal of free, spiritual and universal religion, an ideal not yet found in any of the organized religions. Ours is a religious movement that is free, not creed-bound; spiritual not traditional, scientific not dogmatic, universal not sectarian; a movement, moreover that is heart-warming, head-enlightening, soul-stirring; a movement that represents the deep resolve of earnest men and women to learn the truth, love the truth, live the truth; a movement that is therefore intellectual, emotional and practical. It is intellect daring to search for the truth unaffrighted by any traditional authorities however venerable or august. It is heart, resting on discovered truth and relying on universal changeless law which is simaltaneously eternal and transcendent love. It is conscience, daring to obey higher standards than those of fashion, custom, conventionality, more especially at a time when the national moral consciousness is in danger of conforming its conduct to the dictates of that unspiritual god greed and, in deference thereto, of trampling on the rights of man. Again, our movement is soul, daring to look upon itself as superior to any and all its creations, eager above all else to harmonize its every wish with the eternal Will of the universe. Such is the faith and such the fellowship that make us one. To keep our minds ever open for the reception of new truth, conscious that a finite being living in an infinite universe can never speak the last word on any subject, to keep our hearts ever aglow with the spirit of sympathy and appreciation, to keep our souls loyal to our cause fearless of consequences, as fearless as were our illustrious fathers at Leyden and at Bunker Hill, this is at once our privilege and our responsibility. Only as we remain faithful to this can we continue to represent the vanguard of the world's religious leadership.

EDITORIAL.

HEALING AND PREJUDICE.

The following quotation from an editorial recently written for "The Higher Law" by Mr. H. W. Dresser, editor, illustrates what seems to us the ideal attitude that ought to be assumed by all advocates of "mental science."

"Some of our readers have wondered at our change of front in regard to the physical conditions of disease and in regard to doctors. Speaking for myself alone, the change

has come through a study of recurrences in cases where I have had opportunity to know all the facts. I am free to confess that in five minutes I lost the prejudice of a lifetime. Born and reared in the higher thought world, I have had no personal experience with doctors and medicines. Naturally, I shared the prejudice of all who, in their zeal for the higher thought, are eager to accomplish all things through mind. For eighteen years I have witnessed the successful application of spiritual power in healing, and my faith in this power is unshakable. But, when I heard skilled physicians explaining by virtue of their profound physiological knowledge that which had baffled mental healers, it was a revelation; and I saw that physiological knowledge is as indispensable as is adjustment to natural evolution. Therefore, I say, Welcome to any man, be he materialist or spiritualist, who can throw any light on the law of physical suffering. No one knows it all. The knowledge of healers and physicians combined is as yet inadequate to explain all cases. Meanwhile let us be broad, tolerant, and unprejudiced, ready to consider any hypothesis; above all, ready to let our own deepest evolution do its work, carrying us where it may, regardless of affiliation with any sect or cult."

"INDEPENDENT RELIGIOUS SOCIETY."

Under this name Mr. M. M. Mangasarian formerly connected with the "Ethical Culture Movement," has organized an independent church in Chicago. His Sunday attendance averages seventeen hundred. The bond of union adopted by the Society reads as follows:

"Recognizing the right of private judgment, the sacredness of the individual conviction and the moral obligation to be faithful to one's best thought, we require no assent to any theological or philosophical doctrine as a condition for fellowship, but cordially welcome all who desire to promote the religion of trust, righteousness, joy, and freedom."

This makes the third or fourth independent religious organization established in Chicago. May the day be not far distant when in that city a national religion of independent societies or free churches shall be formed. The need for such an association is obvious to all who appreciate the disadvantages of isolation. If our free churches or independent societies are to be anything more than temporary platforms from which able preachers can address a personal following, organization of the scattered movements must be effected. At present there is no base of supplies for vacancies in any of these churches, no headquarters to which independent ministers can apply for pul-

pits, or independent societies for preachers. Let Chicago with her group of independent churches take the initiative in this important move and co-operation from all other free churches may be heartily counted upon.

A MISSIONARY'S MISTAKE.

Rev. George W. Stone, Pacific Coast Unitarian missionary, recently made the following statement in a letter to the Christian Register.

"The interest in our church in Seattle is steadily increasing, and the growing earnestness of the Unitarians there is manifested by the improvement shown in their financial conditions. The church, however, has the singular fortune to have as a colleague in its liberal work another organization which, under another name, is presenting Unitarian thought." (!!)

If Mr. Stone were to hear some of the thought uttered in this other organization he would discover that it is not all "Unitarian" but also partly "orthodox," and partly "Jewish" and partly of so non-sectarian a character that no Unitarian church would tolerate its utterance. Practical experience has demonstrated that even in a Unitarian church there are some thoughts that a minister cannot express without endangering the loss of his pulpit. The Free Church of Seattle is after all not so superfluous as the ardent denominationalist imagines.

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